



Menahga Principal's Board Report

Lisa Parrish and Michelle Koch
January, 2026

CELEBRATIONS:

December was a wonderful way to close out the 2025 portion of the school year. Our elementary students participated in a variety of special activities and building-wide traditions that celebrated winter learning while bringing plenty of fun and excitement along with it. These moments created meaningful experiences for our youngest learners and added to the strong sense of community across the building. Please enjoy the many photos that capture the joy, energy, and holiday spirit shared throughout the elementary during this special time.



Comfy Cozy Pajama Day



Grinch Day

Elementary Update:

December continued to shine as a memorable close to the 2025 portion of the school year, with several meaningful highlights across the elementary.

Music Programs and Holiday Send-Off

Our 6th grade choir and band concert was a wonderful showcase of student growth and musicianship, and a long-standing Menahga tradition that continues to bring pride to our school community. In addition, our K-5 music program played a key role in creating a warm, cheerful send-off into the holiday season, filling the building with joy and celebration as students and families gathered together.



Service and Community Giving

The elementary proudly joined the high school in participating in the Yeti Food Drive. Thanks to the generosity of our students and families, we were able to successfully help stock our local food shelf—an excellent example of our students learning the value of service and community care.



Traditions That Bring Learning to Life

We also enjoyed many traditional activities that families have come to love, including kindergarten gingerbread baking. As always, those pesky little gingerbread men attempted to flee the kitchen, and our clever kindergarteners eagerly sleuthed them down with the help of staff and students. These traditions continue to create joyful, memorable learning experiences for our youngest learners.



Academic Growth and Assessment

December also marked the beginning of our winter math and reading assessments, which will conclude in January. This important data helps us ensure that all students are making personal growth and allows us to closely monitor who may need additional academic support so every learner can achieve their full potential.

Overall, December was a joyful blend of tradition, learning, service, and celebration—setting a strong foundation as we move into the second half of the school year.

High School Update:

Second Semester is Rolling

Second semester marks a fresh start and renewed opportunity for growth and success. As we move forward, we are focused on building on first-semester learning, supporting students in reaching their goals, and finishing the school year strong. Our aim is to build a schedule that supports meaningful pathways, meets student demand, and strengthens our overall academic program. [Second Semester](#)

Hope has started Senior Check-ins!

AVID Goal Reflection: Organizational and Study Skills

Our AVID team worked to reflect on 1st Semester student reflections.

From Baileigh - The 7/8th grade AVID hour/elective has helped students grow in organization, responsibility, and collaboration. Through biweekly binder checks, students have improved their binder organization and learned the importance of staying on top of their materials. They have also become more skilled at using Google Drive and Calendar to plan, study, and manage assignments. Activities like Jigsaw reading and text analysis have encouraged teamwork and deeper understanding, while new year reflections have helped students set goals and think about their personal progress. Overall, the class has shown that consistent effort, organization, and reflection lead to meaningful growth.

From Jolene - At the end of the quarter/semester we took time in both the 7th grade rotational class as well as both AVID Elective classes grades 9-12. Here are a few of the students' thoughts on the classes.

"I gained a better understanding of what college and career options are available to me in areas of interest. I look forward to taking a deeper dive into my post secondary options" 10th grade AVID Student.

"AVID has taught me why it is important to be and stay organized and it will help me when I go into high school." 7th grade AVID student.

"I have learned how to plan for what is ahead of me. I have applied for my first job, and worked on my interview skills." 10th grade AVID student.

"AVID has taught us how to communicate better and learn to listen to understand each other. We have talked about colleges and careers and options we have when we get into high school." 7th grade AVID student.

The intended student outcome is for students to become more independent, organized, and confident in managing their schoolwork. We want them to not only keep track of assignments and materials, but also to understand *how* to study and engage with learning in a more purposeful way.

We are working on collecting data through surveys and work samples. We will have two Jr. High Binders for you to view.

Advisory Hour

On December 12th, Sourcewell joined Hope to meet with all grade levels and support students as they work through their SchoolLinks overdue tasks. It was a great success. On Thursday, January 29th, we will hold our fourth [Advisory Hour](#) (during 4th hour). Teachers will this time to review school-wide expectations, guide students through SchoolLinks activities, and continue with Brave Connections – our program designed to support student well-being and strengthen emotional intelligence skills.

The Winter Storm Season

All E-Learning Plans are updated and ready to go!

Sourcewell's Students of Character

CONGRATULATIONS to this year's Menahga recipients of the Sourcewell Students of Character Award, (Senior) Alan Skare and (Senior) Melodie Dillon!



This prestigious award honors outstanding juniors and seniors across central Minnesota who demonstrate perseverance, integrity, and leadership.

2025-26 Triple A Award Winner

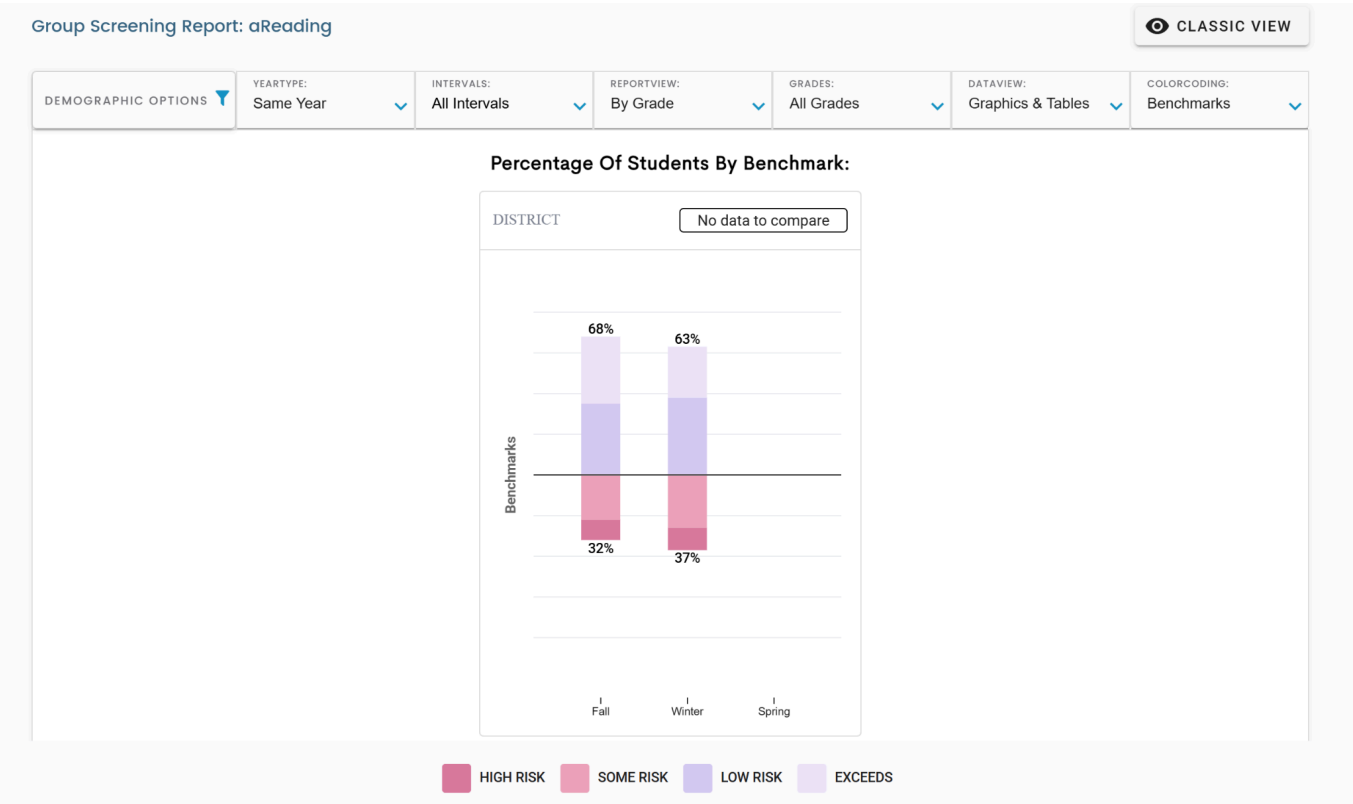
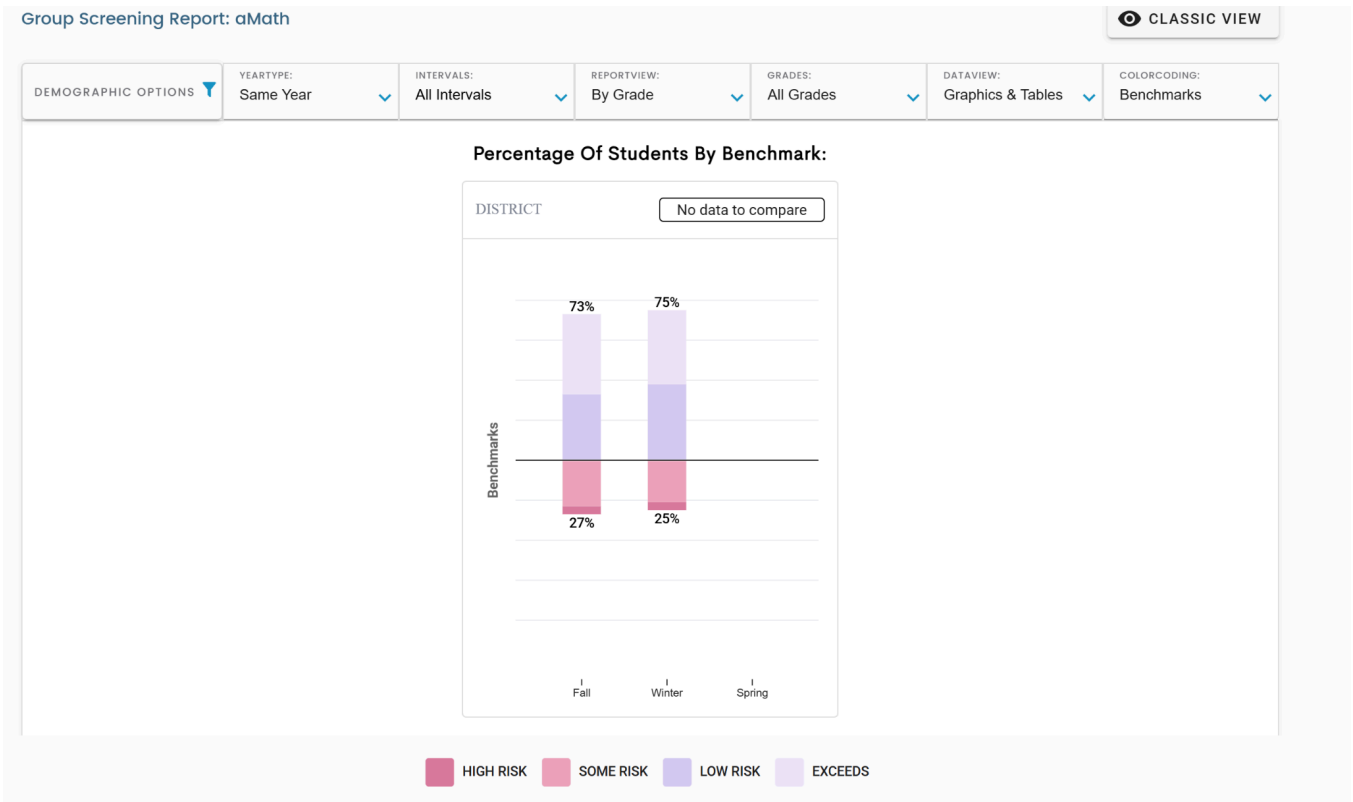
CONGRATULATIONS to this year's Menahga Public School, Minnesota State High School League Triple 'A' Award Winner, Macie Josephson!

Macie, daughter of Hans and Janelle Josephson, has demonstrated excellence in academics, athletics, and arts throughout her high school career. She has consistently achieved a perfect 4.0 GPA, earning straight A's throughout her academic career.



Winter Benchmark Reports

aMath and aReading assessments have been completed. I will have a much more detailed update on scores and reports in February. The following are snapshots of 7-12 Benchmark Scores:



- Important Dates:

- a. Jan. 19th -Staff Development Day
- b. Jan. 21st -23rd -5th grade field trip to Deep Portage
- c. Feb. 3rd -5th - Bus Safety in HSMC K-6th
- d. Feb 11th -Jump Rope for Heart
- e. Feb 12th -Special Olympics @ Camp Confidence
- f. Feb. 16th -President's Day-No School
- g. Feb. 17th -No School/PT Conferences Spring Showcase
- h. Feb. 17th -Random Act of Kindness Day
- i. Feb. 18th -School Bus Driver Appreciation Day
- j. April 1st-Menahga Career Expo

Menahga Principal Goals for 2025-2026

In alignment with the District Strategic Plan, we would like to collectively propose the following goals for the 2025-2026 school year.

Goal 1: Strengthen Literacy and Academic Achievement

Ensure all students achieve at high levels by implementing evidence-based reading instruction aligned with the Minnesota READ Act, closing racial and economic achievement gaps, and building staff capacity in differentiated instruction to support the diverse needs of learners.

- Academic interventions currently happening in K-12
- Walk throughs happening in all classrooms
- Lisa Parrish and Andria Bristow are attending monthly Literacy Meetings at Sourcewell and communication updates to shape future planning for Menahga Public Schools
- Capti Training is scheduled for literacy teachers in 4th-12th grade on January 19th, 2026
- Three hours of Bridges curriculum development time scheduled for January 19th, 2026
- First round of observations for all probationary staff are complete
- Second round of observations for probationary staff are beginning

Goal 2: Expand Career Pathways and Authentic Learning Opportunities

Increase student engagement and readiness for college, career, and life by developing cross-curricular, career-connected learning experiences; expanding community and business partnerships; and providing authentic, hands-on opportunities such as senior capstone projects and internships.

- The Committee met and planned accordingly for further advancement
- Expansion through "Career Play" in Kindergarten
- Expansion of Entrepreneurship in 5th Grade- Coffee Shop
- Career Pathways Week in November, including Elementary
- 2025-2026 Career Pathways Committee Training scheduled with Sourcewell

Goal 3: Support the Whole Child and Invest in Staff Development

Provide comprehensive supports that meet the academic, social, emotional, and behavioral needs of all students, while ensuring every student has a positive connection with a caring adult. Strengthen staff

recruitment, professional development, and training—including emerging tools such as AI—to sustain a future-focused and supportive learning environment.

- New staff taking part in Sourcewell's New Teacher Academy, moved to MPS
- New staff taking part in Mentorship with Kerry White
- AI Training for PreK-12 certified staff on November 14th
- Capti Training is scheduled for literacy teachers in 4th-12th grade on January 19th, 2026
- Data meetings and coaching cycles being implemented with Teaching and Learning Coordinator
- Monitoring of ADSIS interventions in K-12
- ACT testing coordination in process for grades 11 and 12

Menahga School District Enrollment

Grade Level	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	March	April	May	
PreK	41	41	39	39	38				
K	85	85	84	84	82				
1	62	61	60	61	61				
2	73	73	73	72	72				
3	74	73	73	74	73				
4	82	81	81	80	80				
5	67	65	65	66	66				
6	76	75	75	75	75				
7	77	75	74	73	78				
8	80	79	79	80	84				
9	76	76	75	75	74				
10	93	92	92	92	90				
11	70	65	65	64	63				
12	73	72	72	73	73				
Total	1029	1013	1007	1008	1009				
OpenEd			131	129	129				
Total			1138	1,137	1,138				

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa Parrish and Michelle Koch